

Appendix:

More Resources & General Handouts

Finding your school district's scores for the Missouri Assessment Program (MAP)

MAP test scores and other data for individual school districts are found at <http://dese.mo.gov/schooldata/>.

Scroll down to and highlight the name of the district from the box “Alphabetical List of School Districts.”

Click the “load profile” gray box.

Each district page will be divided into categories for information. MAP scores are in the Educational Performance Data. You may have to scroll down to reach that section. Click on the name of the MAP section you want to view. Reading is part of Communication Arts. Other statistics for that school district (graduation rates, annual dropout rates, accreditation, etc.) are on that page also.

Libraries support reading achievement

While debate about methods of teaching reading continues, almost every school of thought now agrees:

- Early access to many kinds of books builds the base for literacy.
- Reading to children and discussing what was read is the single most important thing parents and caregivers can do to help children read and succeed in school.
- Once children learn the basics, they need a lot of easy books to practice reading. The more they read the better they read.
- Recreational reading builds literacy skill and intellectual development.

Library collections and programming make a literacy difference!

LIFT-Missouri

Missouri's Literacy Resource Center

Literacy Investment for Tomorrow, usually called LIFT-Missouri, is the State Literacy Resource Center. It is a 501 (c)(3) nonprofit corporation funded through a variety of state and federal grants, private foundations, and individual contributions. Its major focus is support, training, and resources for literacy providers statewide. LIFT-Missouri has offices in St. Louis, Kansas City, and Jefferson City, and the St. Louis office serves as its headquarters.

As the state literacy resource center, LIFT's mission is to develop and promote resources to increase the literacy skills of Missourians so all individuals can reach their personal and economic potential. LIFT maintains an 800 number (800-729-4443) and serves as a referral to literacy and GED programs statewide. Their Web page, <http://www.lift-missouri.org/>, also offers a directory of programs.

Working with the support of the Missouri State Library, LIFT has served as a state clearinghouse for inquiries about adult and early childhood literacy programs, materials, and professional development and training opportunities. LIFT also provides professional development opportunities in basic and advanced family literacy, using computer technology to access literacy resource, and working with low literate adults with learning disabilities.

LIFT Projects

Innovative: *LIFT's expertise centers on applying creative approaches to literacy-related issues.*

- **Family Literacy**
Since the early 1990s, LIFT has pioneered efforts to promote family literacy in Missouri. Family literacy programs bring together low-literate adults and their young children for a family-focused educational experience. Parents learn parenting, life, and work readiness skills while their children build a solid foundation for entering kindergarten ready to read.
- **Professional Development**
LIFT's professional development activities for literacy providers promote continuous improvement by crafting training sessions linked with ongoing technical assistance, in conjunction with continuous evaluation. LIFT identifies and fulfills training needs not otherwise provided in Missouri.
- **Web-Based Resources**
LIFT's Web site allows access to on-line literacy resources, a searchable directory of literacy programs and providers, on-line discussion groups, links to state and national literacy organizations, and *LIFT eNews*, a free electronic newsletter. LIFT also provides funding and support for an online newspaper with current stories, backed with easy-to-use lesson plans. It is an interactive tool that parents, tutors, and teachers can use to help students become better readers.
- **Early Literacy & Technology**
By utilizing online resources, LIFT helps teachers practice strategies to promote early literacy in parents and their young children. These resources include activities that address phonological awareness, the alphabetic principle, word recognition, listening, vocabulary,

and comprehension. Teachers learn to download lesson plans, experience interactive sites, and order free instructional resources.

Collaborative: *With a wide range of partner agencies, LIFT develops and directs multifaceted, literacy-related projects.*

- **National & State Organizations**

LIFT directs multiple statewide projects and meets stringent accountability measures from state and federal funding sources. Partner agencies include the National Center for Family Literacy, the National Institute for Literacy, the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, the Missouri State Library, and the University of Missouri.

- **Parental Involvement**

The Missouri Parent Information and Resource Center (PIRC) (<http://www.missouri-pirc.org/>) serves parents, schools, and community organizations throughout the state by providing a wide range of information, training, technical assistance, and resources to help parents promote their children's achievement in school. A collaborative effort of LIFT, Parents as Teachers National Center, Inc., ParentLink, Practical Parenting Partnerships, the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, and others, the Missouri PIRC disseminates parent-related information to parents in all areas of the state. On another level, the Missouri PIRC partners provide intensive services targeted to parents in urban and rural communities in Missouri with children attending low-performing schools.

- **Missouri Family Literacy Initiative**

LIFT manages the Missouri Family Literacy Initiative (MOFLI), (<http://www.lift-missouri.org/projects/mofli.html>) composed of leaders from Missouri state agencies and organizations working together to strengthen and expand family literacy. MOFLI has produced family literacy publications, improved program accountability, and helped shape a new law making family literacy an integral part of education in Missouri.

- **Webster University**

LIFT enjoys a formal working relationship with Webster University through the university's School of Education. Together, Webster and LIFT apply research-based solutions to literacy issues and integrate literacy knowledge into academic environments.

Research-Based: *Current research on reading, family literacy, and other topics drives LIFT's efforts to improve the quality of literacy services in Missouri.*

- **Reading**

LIFT relies on scientific-based reading research to develop training programs for adult educators who work with low-literate adults, early childhood educators who work with preschool children, and volunteer reading tutors who work with all ages.

- **Family Literacy**

LIFT introduced family literacy in Missouri in 1991. According to research from the U.S. Department of Education, family literacy has a positive impact on parents and children. Parents become more self-sufficient, children enter school more ready to learn, and families change the intergenerational pattern of low literacy and poverty.

- **Training & Technical Assistance**

LIFT creates new, research-based professional development opportunities for early childhood and adult educators. LIFT staff regularly visit family literacy programs

throughout the state to provide individualized training for literacy providers to work with programs to improve quality and accountability.

- **Tutor Training**

LIFT provides unique tutor training, delivered through initial and ongoing sessions, including: reading level assessment, lesson plans, individual and small group literacy skill building, electronic journaling, and activities that create a literacy-rich environment.

LIFT Office Locations

LIFT St. Louis
11885 Lackland Rd, Ste 600
St. Louis, MO 63146
(314) 291-4443
(314) 291-7385 fax

LIFT Kansas City
C/o Webster University
1200 E. 104th Street
Kansas City, MO 64131
(816) 926-4278
(816) 444-1740 fax

LIFT Jefferson City
398 Dix Road, Suite 203
Jefferson City, MO 65109
(573) 636-0101
(573) 636-0103 fax

What makes a book easy to read at any reading level?

- ✓ Larger print - twelve point or larger.
- ✓ White space and good contrast between print and background.
- ✓ Ragged right margin (not justified at the left edge).
- ✓ Diagrams and pictures on the same page as the text that refers to them.
- ✓ Type styles that are regular and have “feet” or serifs.

(Like **this** or **this** but not **this** or **this**.)

- ✓ An author who does not assume the reader has background knowledge.
- ✓ Writing styles using simple or short sentences.
- ✓ Writing styles using straightforward connected narrative.
- ✓ Vocabulary simple enough that the reader does not meet too many unfamiliar words, but not so restricted that the story becomes stilted or incomprehensible.
- ✓ Predictability and pattern.
- ✓ Short chapters or sections.
- ✓ Modern language with standard spelling.

What makes a book hard to read at any reading level?

- ✓ Tiny print.
- ✓ Page after page of print without breaks.
- ✓ Bright background colors and poor contrast with the print.
- ✓ Jumbled appearance, extraneous graphics.
- ✓ Story interpolations or scrambled chronology.
- ✓ Difficult or highly varied vocabulary. (Although ironically, big words follow the rules of phonics more often than small common words do.)
- ✓ Figurative or foreign language.
- ✓ Long or complex sentences.
- ✓ Topics outside of the reader’s experience or familiarity.
- ✓ Old-fashioned language, attempts to spell out accents, or mispronunciations.

A General Note About Reading Levels

When we try to collect materials suitable for low-level readers, the literacy level of the materials is an issue in addition to the other criteria we use in collection development. Publishers use several ways of indicating what materials might be suitable for new readers, which is an artificial process used to indicate materials suitable for readers at different skill levels. Imperfect but sometimes useful, it does help us select materials that are easy to read for children and others who might be new or struggling readers.

Reading levels compare readers to each other, and are only somewhat standardized. An individual's ability to read a particular text depends on many factors, including background knowledge, interest, the quality and style of the writing, format, and graphics, and a measured reading level. It is seldom necessary to calculate a reading level for books, particularly children's titles, since many catalogues, lists of instructional materials, and lists of reading materials for the many curricula or publishing houses available on the Internet place reading levels of some kind on materials. The increased emphasis placed on testing and reading levels leads publishers to calculate reading levels for more and more materials.

The most common reading level marker is grade level; that is, text considered independent reading at each grade in school. There are several formulas for figuring grade levels, and different formulas sometimes yield different grade levels on the same passage. Different companies may figure grade level a little differently. Grade levels are probably the reading difficulty level most frequently used. Grade level is tied to the schooling of children but sometimes figured for adult or young adult materials.

Another reading level, Guided Reading (GR), measures the level at which a student can successfully read a text with some help from a teacher. Other frameworks call this point the instructional reading level. GR levels are usually tied to grade levels. Since libraries are providing leisure reading materials, the guided reading level is of less interest than the independent reading level.

Since grade levels are not particularly pertinent for adult students, in adult reading circles grade levels are sometimes replaced with the terms "beginning new reader," "intermediate new reader," and "advanced new reader." These terms are also realistically vague since reading level depends on some things that can't be measured ahead of time. Similarly, terms such as "emerging reader," "independent reader," "advanced reader," or "struggling reader" are descriptive, but only somewhat helpful in choosing books.

Another way of measuring and indicating the difficulty of a text is the lexile measurement. Lexiles measure the difficulty of text itself. Lower lexile levels are easier to read. For practical purposes, the lexile scale runs from a very simple 200, which would be a simple book like *The Very Hungry Caterpillar*, to 1700, which would be an advanced textbook. Lexiles of 500-700 are probably an intermediate adult student or middle (third or fourth grade) elementary student reading level. Since lexiles deal with text itself instead of standards for instruction, they may be most useful for librarians.

Web Sites With Literacy Activities

Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory: www.nwrel.org/learns/trainingopps/games/

Missouri Department of Conservation: www.conservation.state.mo.us/teacher/elementary/

PBS teacher resources: www.pbs.org/teachersource/

PBS Reading Between the Lions: <http://pbskids.org/lions/>

Summer Home Learning Recipes: www.ed.gov/pubs/Recipes/

Library of Congress Homepage for Kids & Families: www.americalibrary.gov/cgi-bin/page.cgi

Children's Literature Web Guide: www.ucalgary.ca/~dkbrown/lists.html

The Saint Louis Art Museum's Resource Center (www.slam.org/) provides services and instructional materials such as slide kits, videos, audiocassettes, posters, and touchable-art kits. These materials are wonderful tools for educators, researchers, students, and parents. Loans of the materials are made to Museum members (sorry, metropolitan-area members only) and educators from Missouri, and Illinois educators who are members or with a rental fee; others may purchase the materials.

St. Louis Science Center: www.slsc.org/

Bill Nye the Science Guy (check out the "at home" demo section): www.billnye.com

The Kids on the Web: Fun Stuff I: www.zen.org/~brendan/kids-fun.html

Web sites for Kids

Dr. Seuss's Seussville: www.randomhouse.com/seussville/university/

Children's Television Workshop: www.ctw.org

Smithsonian Institution-National Zoo: www.si.edu/natzoo/

Teach-nology: http://teachers.teach-nology.com/web_tools/materials/bingo/

Crossword puzzle maker: www.puzzle-maker.com/CW/

NASA Kids Word Find builder:

<http://kids.msfc.nasa.gov/Teachers/WordFindBuilder/PuzzleBuilder.html>

NASA Educational Division: <http://kids.msfc.nasa.gov/Teachers/>

Dave's ESL Café: ESL lesson plans & Web sites: www.eslcafe.com/

Information, activities, and advice for Spanish-speaking parents (and tutors) about reading (in English and Spanish): www.colorincolorado.org/

No Flying, No Tights: A site reviewing graphic novels for teens: www.noflyingnotights.com/

Write Away! Graphic Novels and Comic Books – Information about using graphic novels and comic books to encourage new readers: <http://improbability.ultralab.net/writeaway/comics.htm>

American Library Association literacy section: www.ala.org/Template.cfm?Section=literacy

This 'how to' site that gives instructions for crafts and do it yourself projects for a variety of age groups and themes, includes section on using recycled and found supplies: www.make-stuff.com/.

Scripts and Tips for Reader's Theater: www.aaronshp.com/rt/

What Libraries Do For Literacy in Missouri

A compilation: ongoing library literacy efforts, ideas, activities, and collaborations for all age groups from public libraries in Missouri

Literacy efforts in Missouri's libraries are diverse, and they represent many kinds of service and literacy support. The ideas collected below come from libraries in Missouri, and some are programs previously done, others are efforts in process, and still others ideas that are being developed. They are collected here as a catalogue of ideas that any other library in Missouri might borrow to increase library literacy efforts. The best ideas often come from the trenches!

ADULTS/PARENTS

- * Put a deposit collection or rotating collection of new reader materials in an AEL center.
- * Provide space for local literacy council students and tutors to meet; in some cases provide classroom space for literacy classes or ESOL classes.
- * AEL, adults from a Family Literacy Center, or a teen parent group visit the library on a regular basis. Libraries can plan for them, reserve computers, issue library cards, offer short courses in things like getting tax forms off the Internet, walk them through a pre-selected parenting site, etc.
- * Host or arrange programs in the community or in the library for both literacy groups and other community or civic groups. It not only educates, but removes the distinction between literate and low-literate patrons.
- * Have GED books available in spite of problems (maybe at least on reference shelf). Several places have persuaded a local business to provide these since the rate of non-return is high.
- * Advertise for GED classes by posting a flyer in the sections of the stacks that interest people who may need them. Be sure to also consider flyers for those people who are involved with those needing literacy help.
- * Offer special collections, such as a parenting collection or a collection of job seekers resources, which unobtrusively include books at low reading levels.
- * Allow area literacy programs or a social services agency to issue referral cards or coupons, to be presented at the library for a library card application and maybe a free book. The referral form or card could already include the information needed to fill out the application, and will alert the desk staff to be helpful. It doesn't need to look like an educational referral, but more like a free coupon.
- * Figure out a way besides having uneasy staff members get library card applications to adults who aren't used to the library: For example, parent educators could have everyone fill out a

library card application at a meeting and follow up with a meeting at the library that includes a tour.

- * Use appropriate “weeds” from the collection to put an offsite collection at an adult education center, nursing home, shelter, or waiting room; since the books and magazines are “weeds,” loss won’t matter.
- * Shelf a copy of a book that has been filmed beside the video of that film.
- * Offer workshops for adults, such as “How to Help with Homework,” or “How to Survive and Help with a Science Project.”
- * Programs to support kids reading achievement, that include parent participation.
- * Partner with a local adult education center or parent group to offers short courses, such as “Helping Your Kids with Division,” that address skills that parents also need but may not want to admit they need.
- * At least one library periodically hosts “Phonics for Parents” presentations.
- * Programs for seniors including computer literacy, large print books and taped books to nursing homes, referrals to Wolfner Library for the Blind and Physically handicapped
- * Parent educators use the library for meetings, and help families get cards and learn to use the library.
- * Offer conversation practice groups or other ESOL efforts; some can be intergenerational.
- * A partnership with Head Start that once a year brings in ten families for an evening program on reading with kids plus free books.
- * Encourage ABE visits to the library on a regular basis. This gets those clients at the library, and gives the library a chance to prepare for their needs, reserve computers, etc.
- * Consider selected juvenile works as alternatives for adult new or struggling readers.
- * The librarian comes to parent education sessions as resource person in AEL or Family Literacy programs.

YOUNG CHILDREN/PRE-LITERACY ACTIVITIES

- * Rotate boxes or tubs of books to local public daycare centers. A program in one large city customizes tubs for the individual daycare centers and allows children to check out the books and even take them home, monitored by a teacher. They have the resources to forgive losses and overdue fines from the daycare centers.

- * Send a librarian to daycare centers on a monthly basis, offering story times and/or books to choose and keep at the center until the librarian comes back. Then “trade” for new books the next time the librarian visits, which introduces the concept of check out and return.
- * Offer story hours and other activities for specific groups, which takes services to them and acculturates them to library expectations.
- * Offer daytime programs for groups like Head Start.
- * One library has a designated story time for special needs children, in collaboration with a special needs center. The center’s aides are there to help with the children.
- * Offer story hour especially for daycare centers and preschools so teachers and aides are there to help with kids and follow-up.
- * Arrange preschool reading programs with volunteers to help read, and offer an activity calendar to take home.
- * Use the library facility for daycare licensing workshops, which brings in workers and makes them aware of the library.
- * Lend developmental toys and/or reading/spelling/math games.
- * Form local partnership with organizations like Success by Six or Caring Communities.

SCHOOL AGE KIDS AND TEENS

- * Tutor school kids, either by individual volunteers or through formal homework helpers programs. This is probably more common now than tutoring adults.
- * A state representative read for story time and brought donated Scholastic books with him.
- * Workshops like “Draw Your Own Comic Strip” and “Icky Science for Kids.”
- * A science project program has been popular where the science fair is important to the community.
- * Read Across America events, where younger kids enjoy the events and older kids help host or produce them.
- * Teen versions of ESOL conversation partners groups, if there is an immigrant population in your area.
- * Partner for reading efforts with local schools, both in programming and to have certain materials correlating with programs at the school.

- * Set aside activity time for a group foster home.
- * Offer public library presentations and book talks at schools.
- * Purchase a book in honor of each kindergarten graduate with a special bookplate, host a party and let the honored children be the first to check out those books.
- * Reading clubs/book groups after school (some with incentives through or support from local business).
- * Spanish classes for kids (other languages or topics work, too).
- * Summer Reading programs, most often the Missouri State Library program
- * Summer reading signs up groups (YMCA camp, for example) as well as individuals.
- * Day care centers and summer camps sign kids up for summer reading, and help kids meet their goals.
- * After school programs are regularly scheduled, or a library staff member goes to them with a reading-related activity on a regular schedule; sometimes this is done in collaboration with the school library.
- * Winter reading programs. Refer to all those past summer reading manuals for ideas.
- * Writing contest for kids. Letters About Literature is a national one, with a statewide level contest as well (<http://loc.gov/letters>).
- * Team reading events or contests that let struggling readers participate along with with more fluent readers.
- * Reading events or contests where a group of friends or other groups such as Brownie troops enter as a group. This mixes struggling and fluent readers and makes the good readers peer group models while it lets slower readers get in on the fun.
- * Facilitate and/or host reading emphasis programs involving athletes from local colleges, or even occasionally a professional athlete.
- * Acquiring materials that go with *Accelerated Reader*, *Reading Recovery*, etc., that are used in the local school; some headaches go with this but it does get the kids who need to be reading to read and come to the library.
- * Reading and other educational software available on computers.
- * *Reading Is Fundamental* (RIF) programs.

- * Home schooling programs and services.
- * Teen classes/groups for books or hobby or interest groups.
- * Activity alternatives to the television.
- * Math materials, answers, and games.
- * Teen summer reading with incentives from local businesses.

FAMILIES

- * Family Nights at the Library and other family programming.
- * *Parents As Teachers (PAT)* or *Practical Parenting Partnership (PPP)* cooperation.
- * ‘Help your child read’ packets for parents, with suggestions for games, word lists, etc; the material in these kits is at a low adult reading level.
- * Obtain a grant to keep the school library open as a substitute or adjunct to the public library.
- * One library has book exchange racks in a local coffee shop and Laundromat.
- * A few libraries have done the ‘Read from the Start’ program with the Missouri Humanities Council, or other national grant programs such as Prime Time or PBS Between the Lions. Some have also adapted ALA’s Born to Read or Dolly Parton’s Imagination Library for their localities.
- * Give new parents a bag of infant books and parenting materials; some libraries do this through a hospital and others do it directly. Also consider giving siblings with new brothers or sisters some books and a bag, too.
- * Place short books at all reading levels in places where people have to wait: the doctor’s office, social services offices, clinics, etc.
- * Have reading events for families or groups of siblings (great for home schoolers).
- * Find events where book give-aways or prizes are appropriate, such as trick or treat at the library or community festivals.
- * Include books in holiday food baskets given to families by other community organizations.

**For additional
information,
please contact:**

Missouri State Library
Library Development Division
600 W. Main, PO Box 387
Jefferson City, MO 65102

Phone: 1-800-325-0131
(toll-free in Missouri)
or (573) 522-9564
Fax: (573) 751-3612
www.sos.mo.gov/library